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SUBJECT: NORTH KIVU UPDATE (9/11/07 16:00 GMT): REGION  
REMAINS CALM FOR ANOTHER DAY

REF: KINSHASA 1082

¶1. (SBU) North Kivu remained relatively calm September 11, five days after MONUC peacekeepers facilitated a halt in fighting outside the provincial capital Goma between soldiers loyal to dissident General Laurent Nkunda and pro-government forces. MONUC and Congolese military (FARDC) officials told us they have received no new reports of any major fighting anywhere in the province between the two sides. MONUC spokesmen in Goma told us there was a limited exchange of gunfire September 11 between Mayi-Mayi militia forces and Nkunda loyalists around the village of Rubaya, about 25 miles north of Goma in Masisi territory. Rubaya has been under the control of Nkunda's forces since late August. A combination of supposed Mayi-Mayi and FDLR fighters attacked Nkunda forces September 9 elsewhere in Masisi (reftel).

¶2. (SBU) MONUC military officials told us they remain concerned about the continuing movement of various forces throughout the province. FARDC authorities in North Kivu said the integrated brigades are reinforcing their positions near Sake and in Rutshuru territory north of Goma. MONUC military observers report that pro-Nkunda elements have also dug into positions in the hills surrounding Sake, while troop movements have been observed in parts of Masisi territory under Nkunda's control.

¶3. (U) MONUC officials confirmed September 10 that its peacekeepers successfully evacuated a group of FARDC soldiers and their families from an Nkunda-held area on September 9. Upon request from FARDC authorities in the region, a contingent of MONUC peacekeepers escorted 102 soldiers and their dependents (55 women and 69 children) from a military base in Kichanga about 30 miles northwest of Goma to a government-controlled area in Nyanzale, about 15 miles further north. The soldiers were pro-government troops from the mixed Delta Brigade.

¶4. (U) MONUC continues its patrols in and around Goma as well as other population centers. The UN mission's spokesman in Goma reiterated MONUC's resolve to defend such areas against any attacks. In addition to increased air and ground patrols, MONUC has deployed two more companies of peacekeepers to the province from South Kivu.

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